

JC17 Rec'd PCT/PTO 28 MAR 2005

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1. (original) A method for preparing an organic compound, which comprises a dehydration step of distilling off water from a polar organic solvent solution containing the organic compound and water to bring the concentration of water below a given level,

wherein the dehydration step comprises distilling off water together with the polar organic solvent while adding a polar organic solvent to the polar organic solvent solution, or comprises repeating several cycles of adding a polar organic solvent to the polar organic solvent solution and then distilling off water together with the polar organic solvent.

Claim 2. (original) The method for preparing an organic compound according to claim 1, wherein the polar organic solvent solution contains a halogen compound which produces an acidic substance upon coming into contact with water or an alcohol solvent.

Claim 3. (original) The method for preparing an organic compound according to claim 2, wherein the halogen compound is an iodine compound.

Claim 4. (original) The method for preparing an organic compound according to claim 3, wherein the iodine compound is iodine or a metal iodide.

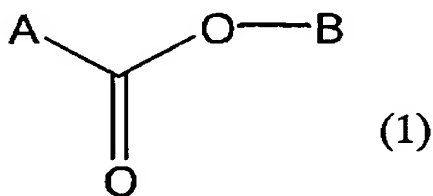
Claim 5. (currently amended) The method for preparing an organic compound according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1, wherein the polar organic solvent solution is a solution in an ether solvent or a ketone solvent.

Claim 6. (currently amended) The method for preparing an organic compound, which comprises the dehydration step according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1, wherein the dehydration step is followed by a crystallization step of distilling off the polar organic solvent from the resulting solution while supplementing the solution with a poor solvent for the organic compound so as to crystallize the organic compound.

Claim 7. (original) The method for preparing an organic compound according to claim 6, wherein an alcohol solvent is used as the poor solvent.

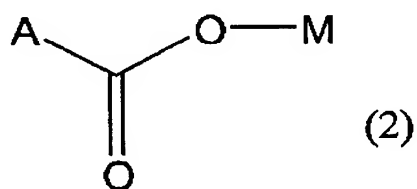
Claim 8. (currently amended) The method for preparing an organic compound according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 7~~ claim 1, wherein the organic compound is a  $\beta$ -lactam compound.

Claim 9. (currently amended) The method for preparing an organic compound according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 8~~ claim 1, wherein the organic compound is a  $\beta$ -lactam compound of Formula (1):

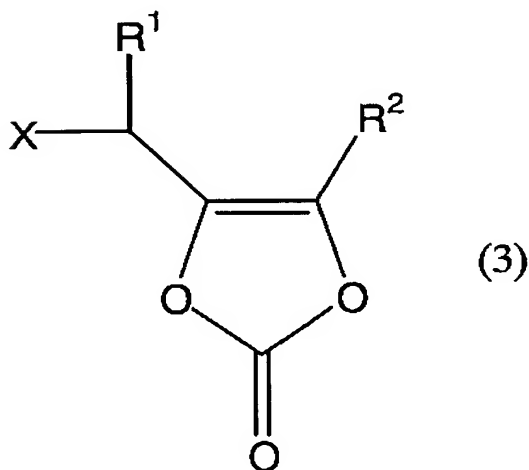


wherein A represents a condensed heterocyclic group having a  $\beta$ -lactam ring structure, and B represents an optionally substituted  $C_1$ - $C_{20}$ alkyl group, an optionally substituted  $C_2$ - $C_{20}$ alkenyl group, an optionally substituted  $C_2$ - $C_{20}$ alkynyl group, an optionally substituted aryl group or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group.

Claim 10. (currently amended) The method for preparing an organic compound according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 9~~ claim 1, wherein the polar organic solvent solution is a reaction solution obtained by reacting a compound of Formula (2):



wherein A represents a condensed heterocyclic group having a  $\beta$ -lactam ring structure, and M represents a hydrogen atom or a metal atom, in a polar organic solvent, with a 4-halogenomethyldioxolenone compound of Formula (3):



wherein  $R^1$  and  $R^2$  each independently represent a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted  $C_1$ - $C_6$ alkyl group or an optionally substituted phenyl group, or  $R^1$  and  $R^2$  may together form an optionally substituted  $C_3$ - $C_8$ ring, and X represents a halogen atom, or a solution obtained by working up the reaction solution.